

BRIGHTON & HOVE

**PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
& GIRLS: AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY &
ACTION PLAN**

2012 - 2017

Foreword

The human and emotional costs of violence against women and girls cannot be underestimated. Every year in the UK 3 million women experience rape, domestic violence, forced marriage and so-called 'honour' crimes, female genital mutilation, stalking, trafficking and sexual exploitation. Such violence is a major cause of death and disability and is linked to mental health problems including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, self-harm or suicide and to the misuse of drugs and alcohol.

Over the last few years we have made significant progress in improving our services for those who experience such gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence. However, we recognise that our approach to all forms of violence against women and girls needs to be more integrated, and that we need to work together to reduce the number of these crimes locally and their impact on women and children.

We are pleased, therefore, to present Brighton & Hove's first integrated Violence against Women and Girls Strategy, which draws on evidence and recommendations set out in national strategies and action plans for addressing and preventing violence against women and girls crime types, as well as on local evidence, commissioning and delivery models, and priorities for action.

The Strategy brings together our existing work in these areas and what we still seek to achieve. It commits us to working together and to prioritising resources to change attitudes and to prevent violence against women and girls from happening in the first place; to ensuring that the reporting of these crimes increases and that all professionals are able to identify and effectively support survivors; and to equipping all agencies to hold perpetrators to account which includes bringing them to justice through the use of criminal sanctions where possible.

In November 2011, senior officers from the police, council and public health, all pledged to support an integrated approach to identify and respond effectively to violence against women and girls and to work towards its prevention. We made a commitment to deliver this strategy within a 'White Ribbon City Status' framework, which calls on men to take more responsibility for ending violence against women. This also commits us to increase awareness and alter attitudes and behaviour; to involve men in prevention activities; and to provide effective services to reduce the impact of violence and abuse on victims. This approach supports our view that every resident also has a role to play in tackling violence against women and girls by sending out a clear message that these crimes are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our city.

Our aim is to prevent violence against women and girls; nothing less will do.

..... **Leader, Brighton & Hove City Council**

We pledge to support delivery of the Brighton & Hove Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, through our partnership working and our commitment to prevent violence against women and girls, provide high-quality support for survivors, and offer protection by bringing more offenders to justice.

<p>..... Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council</p>	<p>..... Chair, Local Strategic Partnership</p>
<p>..... Chief Executive Brighton & Hove City Council / Chair. Community Safety Partnership</p>	<p>..... Chair, Health and Well-being Board / Director of Public Health</p>
<p>----- Strategic Director (Adult and Community Services)</p>	<p>..... Chair, Safeguarding Adults Board</p>
<p>..... Strategic Director (Children and Young People)</p>	<p>..... Chair. Safeguarding Children Board</p>
<p>----- Chief Superintendent Brighton & Hove Division</p>	<p>..... Chair, Community Safety Form</p>
<p>..... Chief Executive, NHS Brighton & Hove</p>	<p>..... Chair, Domestic Violence Forum</p>
<p>..... Chief executive, Rise</p>	<p>..... Chair, Sexual Violence Reference Group</p>
<p>..... Director, Survivors' Network</p>	<p>..... Director, Community & Voluntary Sector Forum</p>
<p>..... Director, Surrey & Sussex Probation Trust</p>	

Introduction

Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights, is a cause and consequence of gender inequality in society, and has far reaching consequences for families, children, communities and society as a whole.

Since 1993 the UN has made repeated calls for the UK and other States to take *'integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women'* and since 2009, UK governments have recommended every local area develops a coordinated approach to responding to and preventing violence against women.

The current national strategic framework - "Call to End Violence against Women and Girls" – follows publication of a number of recent national reviews: the Women's National Commission research across England into survivors' experiences of public services and recommendations for service improvements; the Department of Health Taskforce which made recommendations for improving the National Health Service response to violence against women and girls; the review into the role of schools in preventing violence against women and girls, as well as the Stern Review of the justice system and public agencies' responses to rape complaints.

Definition

The United Nations defines violence against women and girls as ***any act of gender-based violence that is directed at a woman because she is a woman, or acts of violence which are suffered disproportionately by women, that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to a woman or girl, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.***

This encompasses, but is not limited to:

- (a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
- (b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
- (c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs¹.

¹ The General Recommendation 19 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1992) defines Violence Against Women and the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women provided further clarification of what a definition should include <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/eliminationvaw.htm>

Protection from violence against women is found in a number of International, UN and European agreements², which recognise that violence against women and girls is inextricably linked to women's and girls' subordinate status in society, and to an abuse of male power and privilege; and also recognise it is a function of gender inequality, and connected to the broader social, economic and cultural discrimination experienced by women.

The term "violence against women and girls" (VAWG) used in this strategy is therefore taken to refer to the range of crime types which are predominantly, but not exclusively, experienced by women and girls which include:

- Domestic violence;
- Rape and sexual violence;
- Stalking;
- Female genital mutilation (FGM);
- Forced marriage;
- Crimes committed in the name of 'honour';
- Trafficking
- Sexual exploitation, including commercially through prostitution and the sex industry, and
- Sexual harassment in the workplace and public sphere.

A detailed definition of each of these strands is available at [Appendix 1](#).

Why a coordinated approach is needed

We need a new approach to dealing with violence against women and girls locally because these crime-types are widespread, significantly under-reported, and impact on most local priorities.

Three million women in the UK experience rape, domestic violence, forced marriage, stalking, sexual exploitation and trafficking, female genital mutilation or crimes in the name of 'honour' *each year*, at a cost of at least £40 billion.³ Survivors count the cost in terms of cuts and bruises, broken bones, miscarriages, sexually transmitted diseases, long-term mental health problems, substance abuse and social exclusion, and in extreme cases, death.

An integrated and coordinated approach is needed because women and girls are the substantial majority of victims of these crime types; young women in particular suffer higher levels of victimisation and many experience multiple abuse in their lifetime. Most often the perpetrators of

² Platform for Action (1995 UN conference, Beijing) ; UN Security Council Resolutions 1820 and 1888 (of which the UK are key supporters); UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment; Convention on the Rights of the Child; UN Security Council Resolution 1325; and Convention Against Trans-national Organised Crime, including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

³ Coy, Lovett and Kelly (2008) Realising Rights Fulfilling Obligations, EVAW.

these crime types are men known to, or in a relationship with, women and girls; and the context is frequently one of abuse of power by men (or a group of men) to control their female victims, for example, by forcing them into marriage, prostitution, pornography or sex.

Other commonalities and connections between these types of violence include: myths and stereotypes that serve to justify or excuse the abuse; high levels of under-reporting and extremely low conviction rates; the extent of repeat victimisation; long-term social, psychological and economic consequences for victims and the historic failure by the state to prevent violence.

Violence against women and girls is one of the most serious gender inequalities in the UK. The gendered patterns and dynamics involved need to be acknowledged and understood in order to provide an integrated and coordinated approach to prevention, provision, protection and justice. Work to reduce and prevent violence against women and girls is therefore central to the delivery of gender, as well as other, equality duties.

An integrated strategy leads to better policy making which is gender-informed and appropriately targeted. It also leads to better prosecution outcomes through improved links between offending behaviour; integrated expertise on violence against women and the transfer of good practice; targeted and improved responses to victims who benefit from support to address a range of issues; and more effective preventative work to develop longer term solutions.

The outcomes in the England violence against women and girls strategy⁴ are:

- Society believes violence against women and girls is unacceptable and is empowered to challenge violent behaviour, leading to fewer victims of sexual and domestic violence;
- Frontline professionals (like teachers, doctors, police and prosecutors) are able to identify and deal with violence against women and girls;
- Employers recognise and support victims of domestic and sexual violence;
- VAWG victims receive good and consistent levels of service;
- Statutory agencies and NGOs get the response right the first time;
- High quality commissioning and service provision at a local level;
- Better support for victims and their families in statutory and voluntary sectors;
- Working together to share information and agree practical action;
- Improved life chances of victims overseas;
- Increase confidence of women and girls to access the criminal justice system;
- Improve criminal justice outcomes for victims of VAWG, including conviction rates;
- Rehabilitate more offenders;
- Multiple incidents of violence are reduced by using appropriate risk management tools.

⁴ HM Government (2012) 'Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls: Taking Action – the next chapter'

Local Vision

Violence against women and girls impacts across the city's priority outcomes within the Sustainable Community Strategy, in particular: promoting enterprise and learning; reducing crime and improving safety; improving health and well-being; strengthening communities and involving people; improving housing and affordability, and providing quality advice and information services.

Therefore, reducing and preventing violence against women and girls is essential if we are to make any progress on: achieving equality in the city; reducing homelessness; improving people's physical and mental health; reducing the harm caused by alcohol and substance misuse; reducing the number of children in care and living in poverty; reducing the levels of offending in the city; and minimising its impact on employers and on the local economy.

Some forms of violence against women and girls this strategy seeks to prevent have until now been addressed through separate domestic and sexual violence action plans. Following some excellent and committed work locally, tangible improvements have been made in how public and voluntary sector services have delivered support, awareness raising and prevention work, and challenged perpetrators by holding them to account, particularly with regards domestic violence.

Whilst we still have a long way to go to in responding to domestic violence effectively, work is even less well developed for other violence against women and girls crime types, including rape and sexual violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour' based violence, stalking, trafficking, sexual harassment and commercial sexual exploitation.

Locally, our vision is for a world without violence against women and girls. Brighton & Hove council services and partnerships are now publicly committed to preventing all forms of violence against women and girls; maximising the safety of survivors and alleviating its effects on survivors, their children and the wider community. This strategy does not entail duplicating good work where it already exists, but provides a framework under which existing work is coordinated and delivered.

To achieve our vision of ending violence against women and girls, this strategy will be delivered within a **perspective and policy framework** founded on gender equality and human rights, to achieve:

1. **Prevention and earlier intervention:** preventing violence against women and girls from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent its recurrence.

2. **Provision of immediate and ongoing support:** providing high-quality support for survivors where violence does occur and ensuring services prioritise the safety of survivors and their children as their first and over-riding priority.
3. **Protection and prosecution:** taking action to reduce the risk to victims of these crimes, and ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable, brought to justice and provided with opportunities for change in a way that maximises safety.
4. **Partnership working:** deliver co-ordinated action across all services and partnerships, informed by consistent and coordinated policies, systems and leadership, to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families.

This strategy represents a partnership commitment and is founded on the invaluable and pioneering role played by specialist support services in the voluntary sector.

It provides a strategic perspective and policy framework to inform partnership working, and contains specific objectives with respect to the priority areas of prevention, provision, protection and prosecution.

An annual delivery plan will be developed and overseen by a VAWG Strategy Group of senior officers to publicly hold agencies to account for its delivery and to ensure that actions are measured.

Whilst this document covers violence against women and girls, violence and abuse perpetrated against girls under 18 years of age is a child protection issue and all incidents of actual or suspected violence and abuse should be reported to the appropriate authorities and dealt with through the mechanisms already established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Similarly, the Local Safeguarding Adults Board has protocols for dealing with violence and abuse perpetrated against older and vulnerable adults, and these mechanisms should be used whenever a vulnerable adult is suspected of being a victim of abuse.

Having a coordinated approach to addressing violence against women and girls crime types does not mean we will neglect the violence and abuse directed towards men and boys or other groups and individuals who experience these forms of violence, or neglect to deal with violence perpetrated by women where this occurs. Community Safety and other statutory services will continue to provide services to all victims of crime and aim to bring all offenders to justice.

Impact and prevalence

Violence against women and girls is a continuum: it is the basic common characteristic that underlies many different events in women and girls' lives, involving many forms of intimate intrusion, coercion, abuse and assault, that pass into one another and cannot always be readily distinguished, but that as a continuum are used to control women and girls.⁵

The continuum of violence against women and girls ranges from being disturbing, to life threatening or fatal. Many women and girls learn to discount and minimise forms of violence and abuse both as a way of coping but also because much of it is normalised. The most common violence and abuse women and girls experience is sexual harassment; many also experience cumulative forms of violence and abuse ranging from child sexual abuse, rape and sexual exploitation to domestic violence, from which two women a week lose their lives.

Impact on human rights, safety, health and well-being

Violence denies women and girls the most fundamental of human rights: life, liberty, bodily integrity, freedom of movement and dignity of the person. Research shows it constrains choices and behaviour since personal safety features strongly in routine decision-making: women and girls are not able to occupy and use public space with the same freedom and ease as men and boys; and interpersonal relationships are frequently marred by the threat and reality of abuse⁶.

Sexual exploitation of women and girls is understood as an act of violence against women, and within this context, commercial sexual exploitation is understood to be harmful, survival behaviour, necessitated by a lack of choices and opportunities. Rather than simply accepting 'sex-work' as a job that some women need to survive economically, this perspective enables us to question why prostitution is the only place where mostly women can turn when other options fail. Rather than assume that men need to buy sex and use pornography, this perspective enables us to question why so many men participate in a business that exploits, harms and risks the survival of women and children as a group.

Many survivors of sexual and domestic violence experience long term effects, which may impact on many aspects of their lives. Impacts of sexual and domestic violence can be wide-ranging and long lasting, and can have direct health consequences, including depression, anxiety, sleep disturbance, dissociative experiences, parenting or relationship problems, eating disorders, self-harm and suicide.⁷ Health consequences include physical injuries, post-traumatic stress,

⁵ The concept of intimate intrusions and a continuum of violence against women and girls was explored by Prof Stanko (1985) 'Intimate Intrusions' and developed further by Prof Kelly (1989) 'Surviving Sexual Violence'.

⁶ EVAW, Realising Rights

⁷ Itzen, C for Home Office and Department of Health, Tackling the Health and Mental Health Effects of Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse, 2006.

psychosis and other physical and mental health problems, alcohol and drug misuse, unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. It is less well recognised that a number of health problems such as obesity and dental neglect due to dental phobia can also be caused by sexual violence and abuse.

Domestic violence can start or get worse during pregnancy, during which there is an increased risk of miscarriage, still or premature birth, brain injury & fractures. Nationally, 70% of teenage mothers are in a violent relationship.⁸ Other consequences of domestic violence include poverty, unemployment and homelessness. Domestic violence also impacts on employers and the local economy by limiting victims' ability to access education, training and employment; decreasing the productivity of employees, and increasing absenteeism and staff turnover.

Impact on children & young people

The impact on children and young people is also significant. Sexual violence against younger women and girls is increasing with one in three girls reporting that they have experienced unwanted sexual touching at school.⁹ Survivors of child sexual abuse may develop patterns of coping that are carried into adulthood resulting in behaviour patterns that are difficult to change without support.

FGM and forced marriage disproportionately affect young women under 18. Young women forced into marriage may become estranged from their families, suffer further violence and abuse and continue to live in fear. Women who have undergone FGM experience numerous short and long-term physical, sexual and psychological effects.

Many young people hold inappropriate attitudes in relation to violence against women and girls, particularly in relation to coercive sex and the normalisation of the use of violence in relationships. Growing up exposed to violence is linked to increased levels of attention deficit disorder; anxiety; stuttering and asthma; reduced educational attainment; increased involvement in anti-social behaviour, all of which have clear individual costs, but also require public services to address them. Most child maltreatment deaths take place in homes where domestic violence is also occurring.¹⁰

The Munro Review of Child Protection (2011) further outlines the link between domestic violence and safeguarding children, and the impact that it has on children and young people. The review references how domestic violence may undermine a mother's ability to parent with authority and the importance of working with the non abusive partner in order to support a safer environment for families to raise their children.

⁸ Harry Kissoon et al., 2002; Debboanire and Sharpen (2008) Domestic violence prevention work.

⁹ EVAW (2011) A Different World is Possible, End Violence Against Women Coalition

¹⁰ London Safeguarding Children Board, 2008, Safeguarding Children Abused through Domestic Violence

Cost

The individual, economic and social cost of sexual offences is higher than any other type of crime. The overall cost of sexual offences in Brighton and Hove is estimated to be £180 million.¹¹

The cost to Brighton & Hove of responding to domestic violence is conservatively estimated to be between £30 million and £32 million per annum for key public services, which, if combined with the estimated human and emotional costs, increases to between £118 million and £132 million per annum. This approximates as:

- £7m physical and mental healthcare costs.
- £5m criminal justice costs.
- £2m housing and social care costs.
- £18m housing, civil legal, employment and other costs, and
- £100m per annum in human and emotional costs.

Prevalence

Worldwide, violence against women and girls is a problem of pandemic proportions; more women suffer rape or attempted rape than have a stroke each year, and the level of domestic violence in the population exceeds that of diabetes by many times.¹²

There has never been a comprehensive survey across all forms of violence against women so there is no strong benchmark for measuring progress. There are certain groups we know very little about - including older women, disabled women, women in temporary accommodation and institutions including prison, and women with mental health problems.

The research that does exist, however, indicates the vast majority of violence against women and girls is perpetrated by known men; family members, neighbours, friends or colleagues but it is also perpetrated by strangers.

Nationally:

- The British Crime Survey shows around 18% men and 28% women report experiencing one or more incident of **domestic violence** from a partner or ex-partner since the age of 16, although the frequency and severity of this abuse is greater against women; 89% of women experience repeat violence, often with years of psychological abuse.¹³ In 2009/10, women were the victim of over seven out of ten (73%) incidents of domestic violence.

¹¹ Brighton & Hove Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment 2011.

¹² Dept of health (2010) Taskforce on health aspects of violence against women and children – final report

¹³ The most comprehensive and rigorous data for the UK come from dedicated modules within the generic crime victimisations surveys; questions cover domestic violence (limited to intimate partners), sexual violence in adulthood and stalking. The survey sample comprises adults aged 16-59 who live in private households. The often cited figure of

- Two women a week are **killed by a current or former partner**: in 2008/09 53% of female homicide victims were killed by a male partner or ex-partner, with an additional 15% killed by other family members; the respective numbers for men are 7% and 8%.¹⁴
- The first UK research on **teenage partner violence** found that three in every four girls compared to one in ten boys encounter harmful behaviour in teenage relationships: girls report greater incidence rates of relationship abuse, experience more severe abuse more frequently and suffer more negative impacts, compared with boys. Of 88% of young people in an intimate relationship, 25% girls & 18% boys experienced physical abuse, 75% girls & 14% boys experienced emotional abuse & 33% girls & 16% boys experienced sexual abuse.¹⁵
- There are at least 5,000 to 8,000 cases of **forced marriage** annually in England; the prevalence of **female genital mutilation** ranges from 66,000 to 273,500, with up to 24,000 girls under the age of 16 being at risk annually.¹⁶
- 20 per cent of women report experiencing **stalking** at some point since the age of 16;
- Women are five times as likely as men to be victims of serious **sexual assault**: around 10,000 women are sexually assaulted and 2,000 women **raped** in one week.¹⁷ 3.7 million women in England and Wales have been sexually assaulted since the age of 16 and across the UK there are upwards of five million adult women who experienced some form of sexual abuse during childhood. Race on the Agenda research¹⁸ found sexual violence and exploitation to be significant weapons used against women **associated with, or involved in, gangs**. This use of sexual violence takes place against a backdrop where girls have little peer support, where girls and boys are confused about consent and their own motivations for engaging in sex, and where young people have little to no understanding of coercion.
- Home Office research showed 85 per cent of women in **prostitution** reported physical abuse in the family and 45 per cent report familial sexual abuse. In terms of prevalence, it is also estimated that up to 5,000 children and young people are involved in prostitution at any one time in the UK, and of these, there is a female to male ratio of 4:1.¹⁹
- It is estimated that 80% of the 600,000 to 800,000 people trafficked worldwide each year are women and girls. Between 4,000- 10,000 women are **trafficked** into the UK every year;²⁰ and 95% of women trafficked into prostitution suffer physical and sexual abuse, with the same

domestic violence affecting one in four women and one in six men conceals that 47 per cent of male victims experienced a single incident with a mean average of seven incidents per victim compared with only 28 per cent of female victims experiencing a single incident with a mean average of 20 incidents per victim (Walby and Allen 2004).

¹⁴ Walby, Armstrong and Strid 'Physical and legal security and the criminal justice system: a review of inequalities', EHRC 2010

¹⁵ NSPCC, 2009

¹⁶ Walby, Armstrong and Strid 'Physical and legal security and the criminal justice system: a review of inequalities', EHRC 2010

¹⁷ Department of Health Taskforce on the Health Aspects of Violence Against Women and Children, 2010

¹⁸ reference

¹⁹ Levy, 2004

²⁰ Townsend 2007; Coy Lovett and Kelly 2008

number experiencing symptoms of trauma similar to those suffered by torture victims. However the true extent and nature of trafficking both internationally and nationally remains largely unknown.

- Studies on **sexual harassment** showed that one in two women; European surveys on violence against women found prevalence rates for sexual harassment were four times those for domestic violence.²¹ Women are more than twice as likely as men to be **concerned** about violent crime, with around one third of young women (aged 16-24) registering very high levels of worry.²²
- The **cost** of providing public services (including health, legal and social services) to victims and the lost economic output of women affected by violence runs to billions of pounds each year. An indicative figure for the minimum and overlapping cost of violence against women and girls is between £37-£40 billion annually.

In Brighton and Hove:

- Over their life course, it is estimated that over 25,000 women (compared with nearly 2,000 men) will experience **repeat domestic violence as adults**; nearly 55,000 women locally will suffer one of these forms of violence (domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, forced marriage, stalking, sexual harassment, female genital mutilation, trafficking, sexual exploitation) in their lifetime.²³
- Last year it is estimated that between 5,389 and 10,984 women experienced **domestic violence**; 2,736 women experienced **sexual assault**, and 6,682 women were victims of **stalking** (Domestic Violence Needs Assessment 2011, based on extrapolation from Home Office research).
- Based on the local LGBT population, one in four - 8,750 lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people - will experience **abuse at some point in their lives**. Of those who had experienced domestic violence in the Count Me In Too research, 36% who identified as women had experienced some form of abuse, violence or harassment from a family member or someone close to them, compared to 27% men.²⁴
- Police recorded data locally provides an underestimate of the number of crimes committed since substantial numbers of people do not report such violence to the police:
 - Local police data on recorded sexual offences in 2008 and 2009 show that 89% of victims of police recorded sexual offences were female and 11% were male. In 2010/11 there were 346 police recorded sexual offences.

²¹ EOC 2000, Jaspert et al, 2003; Schroettle & Muller, 2004; Coy Lovett and Kelly 2008

²² Nicholas et al, 2007.

²³ Domestic Violence Needs Assessment 2011 (extrapolation from Home Office research); Walby and Allen, 2004.

²⁴ http://www.countmeintoo.co.uk/domestic_violence.php

- In 2011/12 there were 323 police recorded sexual offences. In this year 87% of victims were female, 11% were male (2% were either gender unknown or against a group (which includes offences against the crown)). 25% were committed at the time when the victim was under the age of 16 (out of those where age is known). In 2011/12, of all police recorded sexual offences where the offender was identified, 96% (52/54) had male offenders.
- In 2011/12, 3,385 domestic violence crimes and incidents were reported to the police in Brighton & Hove, 288 fewer than in 2010/11. Of these, 1192 were crimes. 79% of police recorded domestic violence crimes were committed against women and 21% were committed against men. For those crimes where the offender was identified, 85% were male (459/540). 46% of offenders were an intimate partner, spouse or common law partner and 33% were an ex-partner.
- Of 263 domestic violence victims whose case was taken to the MARAC in 2011/12, 98% were women.
- In 2010/11, the Sussex Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) supported 70 Brighton and Hove clients. Between April-December 2011, Survivors Network, the local rape crisis and support service, supported 100 local women survivors through its independent sexual violence advocacy service; 52 of whom were referred via the SARC.
- In 2010/11 RISE domestic violence services supported 1,120 survivors (12% more than 09/10), and referrals continue to increase. Between April-December 2011, RISE received 859 referrals and supported 835 local survivors; of these, 225 survivors were assessed as high risk of serious harm or homicide.
- The number of women and girls who have experienced female genital mutilation locally can only be estimated by proxy, using the percentage of maternities to women with genital mutilation. Research by FORWARD showed that in Brighton & Hove there were 112 maternities to women with FGM between 2001-2004.²⁵
- In 2007 study into the sexual exploitation of young people across Sussex found evidence locally of sexual exploitation by family members, sexually exploitative relationships with older men or peers, and informal exchanges of sex for money, drugs, accommodation and other favours. In particular areas, exploitative relationships typically involved young women being coerced into sex by older males.²⁶
- There is, unfortunately, inadequate data with regard to the numbers of women and girls involved in prostitution locally. People in the sex industry are amongst those who are at higher risk of victimisation of sexual violence and are less likely to report incidents. A local

²⁵ FORWARD (2007) 'A Statistical Study to Estimate the Prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation in England and Wales'.

²⁶ Banardos (2007), Tipping the Iceberg - A pan Sussex study of Young People at Risk of Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking

survey revealed that 58% of those who were involved in the sex industry reported they had experienced violence or abuse and, of those, only 13% had reported those incidents to the police.

- Results from Brighton & Hove's Citizen Panel in 2010 showed that fear of sexual assault disproportionately affects women: 13% of women reported that they were very or fairly worried about being the victim of a sexual assault compared with 2% of men.²⁷
- Domestic and sexual violence also presents a risk of harm to children & young people. Locally, it is estimated that 3,670 young people experience domestic violence in the household²⁸, and domestic violence is the most common principal reason for children having a child protection plan in place: in March 2010 this was the case for 126 children (35% of children with plans).
- There is a lack of data locally about domestic and sexual violence amongst young people, amongst Black and minority communities, disabled communities and amongst older people.
- Young people may also be experiencing domestic and sexual violence in their relationships, although no data is available on this locally. A local study into the profile of local young teenage mothers highlighted that around one in three were subject to domestic violence.²⁹
- Between January–December 2011, of domestic violence victim assessed as high-risk of harm locally and referred to the MARAC, 16% were from BME communities and 8% were identified as disabled.
- Brighton & Hove's Scrutiny Panel on Older People (2009) heard evidence on domestic violence experienced by older people and heard that signs of domestic violence amongst older people were not being well recognised amongst professionals locally, which is why data on domestic violence in older age groups is limited.

²⁷ Brighton and Hove Citizens Panel, Community Safety Survey, 2010

²⁸ BHCC 'City, Equalities and Neighbourhood Profiles' 2010

²⁹ Brighton and Hove Children's and Young People's Trust, Health Visitor Caseload report, 2009

Survivors' experiences of services – local consultations

In response to the cross-government consultation to inform the first national violence against women and girls strategy³⁰, the Women's National Commission (WNC) was commissioned by the Home Office, the Department of Health, and the Crown Prosecution Service to organise focus groups across England to collate the experiences and views of women and girls.

As part of this national consultation, 53 women and girls who were survivors of violence and recent service users in Brighton & Hove were involved in local focus groups. These included women who identified as survivors of sexual and domestic violence; lesbians, bisexual, and transgender women; Black and minority ethnic women; older and young women; homeless women; women with mental health problems, and women with problematic substance use.

Whilst the focus groups that took place in Brighton & Hove express the views of a limited number of women, the findings from local groups were consistent with national research which involved focus groups with 579 women and girls, including: Black and minority women, Traveller women; older women; girls and young women; disabled women; asylum seeking and refugee women; women trafficked into the UK; women offenders including women in prison; women in the sex industry; homeless women; women with mental health and substance misuse problems; women from rural areas; women night-shift and retail workers; women survivors of rape and sexual violence, domestic violence, forced marriage, so-called 'honour-based violence', child abuse and incest, and survivors of female genital mutilation.

Sexual and domestic violence was a common experience across many groups and few had received effective support and protection from statutory agencies they had contact with. Women in prostitution, homeless women, women in prison and at risk of offending, and women with problematic substance use, also spoke of experiencing child sexual abuse with no access to support in childhood to recover from this abuse. Disabled women spoke of child sexual abuse and rape from family members, partners and carers; Black and minority ethnic women spoke of sexual violence in relationships, and limited access to support if they did not have English as a first language. Women with insecure immigration status were particularly at risk of being forced into prostitution or faced destitution because of immigration rules which left them without recourse to 'public funds'. Many asylum seekers and refugees had experienced rape as a form of torture in their own country and, as a result of UK immigration laws which denies asylum seekers access to employment or benefits, many were forced in to destitution or prostitution as a result. Women who had been trafficked into this country and sexually exploited by family members,

³⁰ HM Government (2009) Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls (2009)

partners and others had experienced rape and sexual abuse with little access to support or protection.

Although some issues which were discussed in the Brighton & Hove focus groups were specific to either women as service users, or related to women's sexuality, there were also broad themes which came out across all the local focus groups attended by local women, many of which have been replicated in the findings of focus groups nationally:

- Many of the women involved in the consultations felt that their human rights had been violated not only because of the experience they had with violence but because of their experience of statutory services.
- Almost all women who attended focus groups had little trust or confidence in statutory services, and many agencies did not identify when violence occurred and therefore failed to respond appropriately to women's needs. Women involved in the focus groups felt excluded, isolated and rejected from services and recounted numerous examples of being told their experiences didn't count, and that many services either did not believe their experiences or blamed the women themselves for the violence they experienced.
- Few women locally knew how to get help and where to go for support. Very few women were aware of their housing rights and very few knew what would happen if they called the police after an incident of violence.
- Particular groups of women also said services 'labelled' and judged them, which they felt exacerbated the poor response they received and further hampered their help-seeking.

Key themes from local focus groups with women survivors of violence:

- Need for access to information, early intervention and for women to be taken seriously when they disclose violence and abuse.
- Failure of police and criminal justice system to protect victims.
- Need for a joined up approach to local services.
- Need for improved Children's Services response and access to safe child contact.
- Need for improved adult social care responses.
- Need for improved NHS responses.
- Need for improved Housing Services response.
- Recognition of the importance of independent women's services.
- Prevention education work with children and young people.
- Publicity of positive experiences of the justice system.
- Support needs specific to BME women, disabled women and to Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender women to be addressed.

Summary of recommendations made by women's focus groups held locally

From the focus groups there were a clear number of recommendations made by women to help improve support services. These included:

- Training for statutory services so they are equipped to identify violence against women and girls, and respond to disclosures effectively. This should include routine enquiry across all healthcare settings, training for dentists, and for children's services so they can recognise the needs of women as well as their children.
- Remodelling services so that they are needs-led and not risk-based; with a focus on support, and empowerment.
- Having clear information for women about what happens if they report an incident to the police so they can make an informed choice about whether to report violence and abuse. Survivors also wanted improved responses from the police to harassment allegations; and bail conditions which are enforced and take into account a victim's situation.
- The choice to see female health workers, and the co-location of independent domestic and sexual violence advocacy workers at A&E, with GP and mental health services.
- Safe information sharing between statutory agencies; and effective referral of women to domestic and sexual violence support services at the point of reporting and disclosure.
- Health services to log incidences and evidence of violence if women don't want to formally report to the police, and to be more effective in providing evidence to support civil and criminal court cases, for confidentiality breaches to be avoided.
- Health services that are culturally sensitive and that can provide a service in a survivor's first language or through trained professional interpreters, access to healthcare regardless of immigration status, and violence against women to be integrated into health promotion work.
- Education in schools about violence against women and girls delivered by specialist services.
- Health services to promote and fund healthy relationships education delivered by specialist services in all schools,
- Rape alarms should be made available for all women if they need them.
- Sustainable provision of specialist domestic and sexual violence services that are independent from statutory services and provide safe, separate women-only spaces. This should include refuges and crisis services; rape crisis support; community outreach services— which increases access to support and early intervention, is available outside of crisis and criminal justice involvement, and focuses on prevention; children's therapeutic groups and support for adult survivors of child sex abuse, including women's support groups.
- Domestic and sexual violence to be addressed within a violence against women and girls framework to ensure all agencies and partnerships prevent violence against women.

Progress

Domestic violence has been a priority within the Community Safety Partnership for over a decade, and sexual violence and abuse has been a priority for our partnership since 2008, with a predominant focus on improvements in the criminal justice system.

In June 2010, Brighton and Hove's overview and scrutiny panel highlighted gaps in the provision of support to victims of sexual violence and made a series of recommendations. Since this time, Sussex-wide joint commissioning arrangements established a Sexual Assault Referral Centre and local authorities commissioned counselling, rape crisis and Independent Sexual Violence Advisor services to provide improved outcomes for victims.

During 2010/11 domestic violence was the subject of one of three 'intelligent commissioning' pilots. By working with partners across services and communities, a comprehensive needs analysis provided a more informed understanding of the needs of residents and local communities, the demand for services, what works, and what needs to change. This informed the development of a domestic violence outcomes framework and joint commissioning strategy, which has informed the domestic violence commissioning plan for 2012/13.

The 2011 and 2012, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment included separate sections on domestic and sexual violence. The 2011-2014 Community Safety, Crime and Disorder and Drugs Strategy includes three-year action plans on domestic violence and on sexual violence, abuse and exploitation, the sex industry and trafficking. The 2011 refresh of the Strategic Assessment of Crime and Disorder sets out the progress of delivering these action plans to date.

Summary of progress in 2011/12

Throughout 2011/12, greater focus has been given to **prevention and earlier intervention:**

- Online information on council and community safety websites was updated to include violence against women and girls. The city's Amber Card, which contains information about the help available for domestic and sexual violence survivors, family and friends, has been updated, and is available online in six languages. Domestic violence resources for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and trans people continue to be distributed by the community safety team.
- The Commissioner for Culture held discussion groups with culture and arts organisations in the city to explore how commissioning for cultural activity can contribute to prevent domestic and sexual violence and abuse.
- In November 2011, *Brighton & Hove 16 Days* programme was established, which marked the international 16 Days to end violence against women. Action included supporting *Rise* national violence against women conference and *Living Library* awareness events; a theatre

production and discussion at the Dome; and a *Stand-Up to End Violence Against Women* organised by *Charity Chuckle* at the Komedia, in support of Rise and Survivors Network.

- Brighton & Hove works with the Sussex-wide Rape Prevention Steering Group and advice has been provided on best practice in relation to publicity that targets sexual violence perpetrators.
- Work has begun on developing a whole school model for addressing domestic and sexual violence, led by the Healthy Schools Team and supported by Rise from Spring 2012.
- The Communities Team has invested in a capacity building programme by supporting Black and minority women's groups to improve responses to women's safety and well-being in local communities. Further work is needed on raising awareness and meeting the support needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities, and on prioritising work on forced marriage and FGM.
- The Break4Change programme for teenage-child-to-parent abuse continues to be delivered as a multi-agency programme, led by the Communities Team, and a *Daphne* funding application has been made to develop, evaluate and embed this group locally.
- Work has begun to develop the Domestic Violence Coordinated Community Group programme for children and young people who have experienced domestic violence, to be coordinated by Rise and delivered through a multi-agency partnership.
- Meetings with student union officers and workshops between local services and students at Sussex University have identified the need for increased awareness of the help available amongst students, improved university responses to violence against women and closer partnership working. Students Against Sexual Harassment (SASH) has been set up by students and it aims to work with Sussex University, the Student's Union and services in the city to prevent and raise awareness of sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- Basic domestic violence awareness training remains part of multi-agency safeguarding training programmes. It has been agreed to develop and deliver a modular training programme and revise procedures for public services, from 2012.
- Recommendations have been made to enable the development and delivery of the GP domestic violence early intervention programme (IRIS – Identification and Referral to Improve Safety) which is being rolled out nationally. This requires investment in an independent health advocate-educator role to develop and deliver this programme and provide pathways for victims to access ongoing support.

Provision of immediate and ongoing support:

The partnership working arrangements and commissioned services already in place (and which meet national service and accreditation standards) need to be sustained to comply with the coordinated community response model for domestic and sexual violence. These include:

- Independent domestic violence services for survivors (domestic violence helpline and crisis support services including refuge; independent advocacy for victims at high-risk of homicide or going through the criminal court system; health-based advocacy, and community outreach and family support services focussing on early intervention and harm reduction);
- Independent rape crisis, sexual violence advocacy and support for survivors (advocacy, helpline, peer support, counselling and support for survivors of child sexual abuse);
- Community-based and court-ordered perpetrator programmes with integrated partner safety support;
- Multi-agency risk assessment conference system (MARAC);
- Specialist domestic violence court (SDVC) supported by specialist police investigative officers and prosecutors;
- The sexual assault referral centre (SARC).

The Community Safety Partnership has prioritised the strengthening and development of Survivors Network, the specialist independent sexual violence service for women and girls. Local investment into Rise, the independent domestic violence service for survivors, also increased to address a capacity shortfall in community outreach and children's services. At the same time, services were reviewed and restructured to improve effective use of limited resources. Joint investment into these services needs to be sustained to ensure these services continue in 2012 – 2017 and beyond.

The health-based independent domestic violence advocacy service partnership between BSUH and Rise in A&E, midwifery and urgent treatment service has been sustained for 2012/13 and remains a priority.

In addition to the independent specialist domestic violence and sexual violence services locally provided by Rise and Survivors Network, dedicated provision to address violence against women and girls locally includes:

- Brighton Oasis Project – Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP), which supports female sex workers. SWOP has found during this year that whilst the majority of men buying women for sex takes place indoors (brothels, flats, hotels), there is information to suggest that more men are buying sex from lone women and that street-based demand is becoming more prevalent.
- WISE – sexual exploitation service for young people, was developed by Sussex Central YMCA, and has been working to assess the extent of sexual exploitation amongst young people, provide a service for 13-25 year olds at risk or experiencing sexual exploitation, and increase awareness of professionals. The work is overseen by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Sexual Exploitation subgroup.

- Housing Services delivery of the Sanctuary Scheme for victims of abuse.
- Surrey and Sussex Probation Trust delivery of court ordered Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme and individual interventions with offenders who are also victims and perpetrators of violence against women and girls
- Community Safety Partnership Living Without Violence Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme and integrated Women's Safety Support
- Sussex Sexual Assault Referral Centre commissioning, which will be taken over by the national health commissioning board from 2013. The Community Safety Partnership supports the provision of local counselling support for survivors who have attended the SARC.

Protection and prosecution:

The Specialist Domestic Violence Court programme has been re-accredited by the Home Office and Ministry of Justice. The Ministry of Justice continues to fund the Rise criminal justice independent advocate, who works within the city's IDVA service, and provides support to victims going through the court process.

The local MARAC has been reviewed and now meets twice a month due to increasing numbers of high-risk referrals. From 2012 the MARAC Coordinator will be full-time, and all MARAC victims will be referred to dedicated independent domestic violence advocates.

We have continued to support Sussex Police in the delivery of their Rape, Sexual Violence and Serious Sexual Offences Strategy to improve the investigation, detection and prosecution of cases, through partnership and support action.

Other dedicated provision within the criminal justice system, focussing on protection and prosecution of violence against women and girls crime types includes:

- Police Anti-Victimisation Unit which focuses on improving domestic violence investigations, Sexual Offences Liaison Officers, and dedicated police leads on domestic violence, rape and sexual offences, trafficking and prostitution
- The CPS have Specialist Prosecutors for rape and for domestic violence who work within a Violence Against Women Strategy framework for these crime types, determined nationally

Sussex Police operate a policy of toleration of off-street prostitution, and conduct occasional unannounced visits to brothels and parlours with the aim of identifying instances of trafficking (Operation Thames). During 2011/12 they have reported that whilst no instances of trafficking have been confirmed, instances have been suspected.

Partnership working:

The Community Safety Partnership continues to support the multi-agency Sexual Violence Reference Group and Domestic Violence Forum, which have met quarterly and heard from national and local speakers about national developments and models for prevention work.

In addition, other local partnerships working on violence against women and girls include:

- LGBT Domestic Violence and Abuse Working Group & Domestic Violence Housing Working Groups (sub-groups of the Domestic Violence Forum)
- Multi-agency Domestic Violence Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- MARAC and SDVC Programme Operational Oversight Group
- Steering group on people in the sex industry
- Sexual exploitation sub group of Local Safeguarding Children Board

In 2011 it was agreed that domestic violence must be seen as 'core business' for city services and partnerships; and that we need to focus on reinvestment and resource pooling so that prevention and early intervention is prioritised alongside crisis and high-risk responses.

A new Joint Commissioning Group for domestic violence was established to deliver the Domestic Violence Commissioning Plan for 2012/13, which focuses on delivering the domestic violence outcomes framework. This includes city-wide strategic outcomes and service-level outcomes across three types of activity (prevention, early intervention and provision of ongoing support), for identified stakeholders (survivors, children and young people, perpetrators, and communities).

In 2011/12 the LSCB conducted a domestic violence audit which led to a series of actions to improve services. Work by the Local Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards and work on safeguarding locally needs to make violence against women and girls more explicit and connected.

In 2011/12 it was also agreed that future work to address domestic violence in the city is also integrated with strategic and operational responses to sexual violence and other forms of violence against women and girls in accordance with national priorities. In support of this, a commitment has been made by senior officers and council members to support the White Ribbon campaign and to develop a citywide violence against women strategy and action plan, to include actions to enable us to achieve 'White Ribbon city status' in 2012.

Our priorities and commitments

There is a clear financial, emotional, and moral case for addressing violence against women and girls in all its forms. Given the prevalence, impact and costs associated with violence against women and girls, Brighton & Hove council has agreed to work with joint commissioning partners to protect, and expand, the funding available for services to improve their responses to violence against women and girls over the life of this Strategy.

This Strategy is organised through cross-cutting themes applicable to all forms of violence against women and girls: **Perspective and Policy; Prevention and earlier intervention; Provision of immediate and ongoing support; Protection and Prosecution, and Partnership working.**³¹

Perspective and Policy

This strategy is based on the foundations on the vision of ending violence against women and girls, informed by an understanding that to be effective in its prevention, violence against women and girls must be addressed within a gender-equality framework, linked to equalities and human rights, non-discrimination and due diligence standards.

Without a coherent perspective and policy framework, interventions are frequently reactive and determined by the availability of funds or higher-profile crime types. A strategy underpinned by the perspective detailed above will deliver: more coherent policies; a commitment to prevention; provision which is stable; protection which is effective and available to all survivors if and when they need it, and prosecution which holds perpetrators to account and which delivers safe outcome and procedural justice to victims.

Our definition of violence against women and girls, as set out above, is any act of gender-based violence that is directed at a woman because she is a woman, or acts of violence which are suffered disproportionately by women.

This includes domestic violence; rape and sexual violence; stalking; female genital mutilation; forced marriage; so-called 'honour' based violence; trafficking; sexual exploitation including through the sex industry, and sexual harassment in the workplace and public sphere. This definition locates violence against women and girls as a form of systematic discrimination, and links it to gender equality obligations, whilst also allowing for the recognition that men and boys may be victims of some of these forms of violence and for female perpetrators in delivery of responses.

³¹ This approach is informed by national research into violence against women and girls strategies and frameworks by Coy, Lovett and Kelly (2008) Realising Rights Fulfilling Obligations, EVAW.

Outcomes for all services and partnerships to deliver

For local residents and communities to be free from violence against women and girls by:

**Increasing survivor safety,
holding perpetrators to account,
decreasing social tolerance and acceptance, and
increasing people's ability to have safe, equal, violence-free relationships.**

Sub-outcomes to be achieved locally through delivery of this strategy include:

- Increased awareness and knowledge of violence against women and girls and its impact and a decrease in its tolerance and acceptance.
- Increased knowledge and skills about safe, equal and violence-free relationships.
- Increased awareness of options and rights to access services by individuals and communities
- Adults, children & young people feel safe to disclose, are listened to, believed, not judged.
- Improved physical /emotional safety, resilience, and freedom from harm for survivors.
- Increased responsibility by perpetrators and reduced risk through timely safeguarding and justice system interventions.

All services and partnerships have a clear responsibility to act with appropriate effort, care and effectiveness, to ensure a woman's right to live free from the threat and reality of violence and discrimination is upheld, and to ensure women have access to effective remedies and justice.

Policy principles to inform commissioning and delivery

The following principles should inform local joint commissioning decisions, and draw on best practice principles set out in the Domestic Violence Commissioning Plan:

- Violence against women and girls is widespread throughout every socio-economic group and therefore occurs citywide across all neighbourhoods and communities.
- Understanding that violence against women and girls is gendered, and is caused by the misuse of power and control, is central to effective intervention and prevention.
- Survivors' safety must be the over-riding priority in all services, and institutional change should be influenced through independent advocacy. Women survivors value safe, separate, women-only services; the strategic and economic value of women-only provision should be acknowledged, promoted and recognised as a source of expertise.
- Violence against women and girls is a cause and consequence of gender inequality; and although not all occurs within a context of traditional power relations, perpetrators' behaviour stems from a sense of entitlement, supported by sexist, racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and other discriminatory attitudes, behaviours and systems that maintain and reproduce inequality.

- Responsibility for violence against women and girls lies with perpetrators; it is the responsibility of the perpetrator, community and state institutions, not survivors, to reduce and prevent violence against women and girls from occurring.
- Survivors do not experience violence in silos and neither should agencies respond in silos: accessible and holistic provision is needed; all forms of violence against women and girls need to be addressed by services and partnerships, in an integrated and coordinated way, with clear referral pathways between specialist services.
- How services are delivered is as important as what is delivered. An options-based approach to safety and support planning is most effective; one that supports survivors, increases their choices, builds on positive coping strategies, and enables empowerment and self-protection.
- Ensuring non-discrimination requires targeted action and support to overcome barriers to protection. Women who are known to be especially vulnerable to violence and/or who are marginalised, such as women in prostitution, women from BME communities, disabled women, women with mental health or substance abuse problems, young women in care, will require specialised approaches.
- Teenage partner violence requires a coherent approach to prevention, which recognises specific forms of violence (physical, sexual, emotional) and that the prevalence and negative impacts are significantly higher for girls.
- Violence against women and girls may co-exist with alcohol and substance abuse, and mental health problems, although these are rarely causal factors; the frequency of the co-existence of these issues means that risk assessments and interventions should always screen for and address all three issues.
- Ongoing mechanisms are needed for the involvement of survivors in the development, delivery and review of local services.
- The cost of violence against women and girls is significant and reinvestment and resource pooling is needed so that prevention and early intervention approaches are prioritised alongside crisis and high-risk responses.
- Work in partnership is needed in accordance with the coordinated community response model; however, multi-agency working cannot be undertaken at the expense of service improvements in individual agencies.
- Violence against women and girls must be seen as 'core business' for public services and partnerships, and for commissioning, strategy, policy and service improvement work in the city. Outcomes for victims-survivors, in terms of safety, well-being, empowerment and access to support, not just satisfaction, should be the measure of success across the statutory and voluntary sector.

Integral to the success of this strategy is the development of mechanisms for monitoring, measurement, and evaluation. This requires collection of data that measure the prevalence of violence, reporting and detection rates, the availability and use of support alongside the impacts of specific policies.

This perspective and policy framework provides the necessary foundations for integrated strategy, and places prevention at the centre of our approach rather than at the margin.

Prevention and earlier intervention

Preventing violence against women and girls from happening by challenging and changing the attitudes and behaviours which foster it, and intervening early where possible to prevent its recurrence

Violence against women and girls is perpetuated by historical and cultural norms and practices; the promotion of socially prescribed gender roles; women's economic and political inequality, and social policy and legislation. In Brighton & Hove, our vision is to end violence against women, not simply improve reactive responses once it has happened. Prevention must be at the centre of our approach, rather than an add-on.

Prevention work involves changing attitudes and behaviour to stop violence from happening in the first place: we need to use the media, publicity and education programmes to change societal, institutional, community and individual attitudes and responses to violence against women and girls.

Prevention work involves challenging the underlying structures that perpetuate gender and other forms of inequality: we need to address inequalities in terms of race, ethnicity, class, immigration status and nationality, disability and sexuality, which also intersect with gender inequality to affect individual experiences of and vulnerabilities to violence.

Prevention work involves identifying and responding early to violence against women and girls, wherever it occurs: in the family and intimate relationships; in local communities; in the workplace or at school or college; in public spaces; in institutions, and through commercial sexual exploitation in sex industries. A long-term commitment to prevention should incorporate clear messages about the unacceptability of using power over women and girls and the necessity of transforming perpetrators' behaviour whilst at the same time challenging the broader 'conducive contexts' of inequality and misogyny which reinforce violence against women.³²

A core element of this strategy is to recognise the potential in communities and develop programmes that equip all members of the public to contribute to the reduction and prevention of violence against women and girls. Some forms of violence against women are typically perpetrated by family members, and may also involve members of the wider community. Here, the role of the family and the community can be to act as a source of support and protection, but only where a wider commitment to empowerment of women and girls, gender inequality and awareness of the unacceptability of violence is encouraged and enhanced.

³² Professor Liz Kelly, in a speech at Violence Against Women Conference, Sussex University, November 2011. The concept of 'conducive contexts' was developed by Professor Liz Kelly and colleagues at CWASU, London Metropolitan University.

Prevention work also involves increasing the confidence and resilience of women and girls: women's self defence programmes offer an integrated approach to violence prevention by combining cognitive, behavioural, psychological, social and physical dimensions to empowering women and girls; and there is compelling evidence demonstrating that such programmes lead to increased empowerment of women and girls and a reduced fear of violence.

Prevention work locally also must involve coalitions with the many men who chose non-violence, and the identification of 'ambassadors' to encourage men and boys in the community to participate in the global movement to eliminate violence against women. To support this approach, Brighton & Hove has made a commitment to achieve the White Ribbon city status in 2012.

Prevention work also involves engaging employers in their corporate social responsibility to challenge violence against women and girls. For example, licensed taxi companies and the hotel industry are considered particularly important with respect to preventing commercial sexual exploitation of women and children. Informed by the international code of conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism³³ we are committed to raising awareness of how the tourism industry is implicated in the sexual exploitation of women and girls, and how we can support local businesses to raise awareness of and sign up to a local code of good practice. Licensing requirements and other forms of support will be offered to enable hotels and taxi companies to adopt measures to identify and respond to sexual exploitation and other forms of violence against women and girls.

Brighton & Hove has made a commitment to:

*(* denotes required action to achieve white ribbon status)*

- Develop information and resources to raise awareness of local communities, and enhance the capacity of family and friends of survivors and perpetrators to respond effectively to violence against women and girls. This will include targeted action to promote violence against women and girls prevention messages to the local male population.*
- Deliver a programme of capacity building with BME women's groups to raise awareness and improve community responses to domestic violence and other forms of violence against women. The lessons from this work will be used to inform capacity building Gypsy and Traveller communities, to develop women's peer education and similar programmes.
- Deliver school-based approaches to gender equality and domestic and sexual violence education, which can be expanded to deliver violence against women and girls prevention

³³ <http://www.thecode.org/>

education. This will include training on gender and violence against women and girls for teachers and school staff, to complement teacher training and professional development.*

- Support local colleges and universities to effectively address violence and abuse (including domestic violence, rape and sexual violence) against students and employees, and in particular to: identify pathways for students to report violence and access help and support; provide training for key university staff and student support services; and develop methods for collating and analysing data.
- Improve resilience of girls and young women, by developing a citywide approach to the provision of women's and girls' self defence classes in schools and other community settings.
- Resource, develop and deliver a communications strategy on violence against women and girls which particularly targets perpetrators of violence. This needs to be done in parallel with increasing the capacity of local sexual violence and domestic violence services so that survivors can access independent specialist support and advocacy services.*
- Include information on violence against women and girls relevant to survivors, children and young people, perpetrators, family and friends, on the council and other partner agencies' websites. Violence against women and girls information should also be provided to all staff working in public services and displayed in public areas, town halls and service contact points, which includes information in at least three community languages or alternative formats (Braille, tape, video, large print).*
- Promote the national guidance for journalists on reporting violence against women, due in summer 2012, amongst local press and media organisations.
- Organise annual awareness and publicity, which includes holding annual events and exhibitions, to coincide with *Brighton & Hove 16 Days* (November 25th – December 10th).*
- Continue to explore how culture and arts organisations, and how commissioning for cultural activity, can help contribute to prevent violence against women and girls.*
- Develop a programme of work with sport and local businesses to raise awareness, promote anti-violence against women messages, and engage in fundraising for specialist services (for example, targeting Brighton & Hove Albion, and licensed premises).*
- Work with partners involved in licensing in relation to Sexual Entertainment Venues, to ensure the new sexual entertainment venue licensing legislation is adhered to, and that violence against women and girls prevention and the promotion of gender equality is a key consideration in the granting of any new licences in the city.*
- Develop a White Ribbon Ambassadors programme: Ambassadors are respected men from a range of sectors who are willing to encourage men and boys in the community to participate in the global movement to eliminate violence against women.*
- Develop and deliver a modular training programme for professionals on domestic and sexual violence that should be extended to all forms of violence against women and girls. This

should include promoting the take up of the national GPs e-learning on violence against women and girls;* and ensure that dental clinicians locally receive training on domestic and sexual violence issues.

- Update domestic violence service delivery procedures and workplace policies, in accordance with national occupational standards and service standards. This will involve also working with colleagues to ensure we have policies and procedures in place to respond sensitively and appropriately to victims of sexual violence and other forms of violence against women and girls, building on good practice policies developed for domestic violence.*
- Deliver the domestic violence Identification & Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) early intervention training, support and referral programme with GPs, the key aspects of which are the delivery of training and education to GP surgeries, clinical enquiry by GPs, the development of care pathways and an enhanced referral pathway to specialist domestic violence services.*
- Incorporate best practice domestic violence workplace procedures into the new City Council People Strategy for 2012/13, alongside the promotion and delivery of domestic violence workplace policies by council and by partner agencies, and ensuring policies connect to the broader context of violence against women and girls crime types.
- Support third sector specialist services to develop early intervention and community approaches to address stalking and harassment.
- Ensure fully accessible services so that survivors and perpetrators face minimal barriers to seeking help and to accessing the support they need. This includes the safe use of interpreting services by public services; supporting specialist services to enable access to interpreting services; and local arrangements to ensure that survivors and their children with insecure or temporary immigration status are supported while they access safety and the violence is prevented.

Provision of immediate and ongoing support

Providing high-quality support for survivors where violence does occur and ensuring services prioritise the safety of survivors and their children as their first and over-riding priority

In addition to obligations to prevent violence, local authorities and other public services have a duty to take appropriate and effective action concerning acts of violence against women, including provision of redress and support services.

Public services, community and voluntary sector organisations, and independent specialist violence against women and girls services, all have a key role to play in the provision of a range of support options. Such support needs to enable survivors of violence against women and girls to access a place of safety, advocacy and support immediately and in the longer term to undo the harms of violence, and to seek justice through an effective criminal justice system when it is needed.

Brighton & Hove is committed to providing and supporting an effective network of specialist violence against women and girls services that provide safety, advocacy and support to those who are experiencing, or have experienced, gender based violence.

We recognise the unique role that independent women's services play in the provision of support and advocacy for survivors: the most consistent findings in successive evaluations show that women and girls who use specialist women's support services report being safest and are the most satisfied by interventions. Specialised independent violence against women organisations are acknowledged to be a key source of expertise locally, and the strategic and economic value of women-only provision is also recognised and will continue to be promoted.

This strategy is committed to ensuring that all women have routes to safety that are not determined by their personal circumstances, through provision of a range of services and creating options through welfare provision, access to an independent income and employment. Women are three and a half times more likely to be subject to domestic violence, two and half times more likely to experience sexual violence and more vulnerable to stalking if they cannot find £100 at short notice.³⁴ This illustrates connections between violence against women and wider gender equality and also reveals how women subject to financial abuse, women who have lower employment rates and pay levels, and women with no recourse to public funds are especially vulnerable to violence since they are most unlikely to have independent income.

The provision of services needs to be coordinated within commissioning and funding streams. Through joint commissioning, commissioners will ensure consistency and quality of service

³⁴ Walby & Allen, 2004

provision as well as opportunities for development work to be implemented. Outcomes for survivors, in terms of safety, access to support, well-being and empowerment should be the measure of success across the statutory and voluntary sector.

Brighton & Hove has made a commitment to:

- Continue to support and enable the capacity of services to meet demand in the local independent specialist rape crisis support service, the independent specialist domestic violence service (refuge service; helpline and crisis support; community outreach and family service; independent domestic violence advocacy service, and targeted advocacy in healthcare settings and for LGBT survivors); specialist support provided for women and girls involved in the sex industry, and in services that support young people around sexual exploitation.
- Support and enable our existing specialist independent domestic and sexual violence services to ensure they can meet demand to address all forms of domestic and sexual violence and diverse communities' needs (older women, BME and disabled groups in particular). It is important that services we commission provide safe, non-judgemental secular support services for all women subjected to violence and abuse.
- Ensure we further develop and support the partnership approach between Survivors Network rape crisis services, specialist and general counselling services, and the Sussex Sexual Assault Referral Centre.
- Build the capacity of the Inspire project domestic and sexual violence pathway to enable improved access to specialist support from independent domestic and sexual violence services, in adherence to national standards.
- Ensure increased capacity of accredited community-based interventions with domestic violence perpetrators and associated partner support outside the justice system. The Living Without Violence community programme needs to be able to play a key role in earlier intervention and to maintain accredited by Respect in 2012.
- Ensure public services adhere to minimum standards (for children/family services; adult social care; housing; NHS services; probation; police; drug and alcohol services; legal advice services; CAFCASS; family/civil courts; community and voluntary services, and safeguarding and offender management arrangements) to enable any agency to identify violence against women and girls and respond appropriately on identification or disclosure. The capacity and effectiveness of specialist domestic and sexual violence services are dependent on the effectiveness of these agencies' response to violence against women and girls. In 2012 we aim to deliver targeted service improvements across children's services, adult services, housing services and health services to improve their responses to violence against women and girls.*

- Improve access to support services, as national and local developments are likely to increase barriers for some groups of survivors to access safety and support (for example, for survivors with additional language and interpreting needs, with no recourse to 'public funds', and for survivors needing access to safe housing locally).
- Demonstrate compliance with forced marriage statutory guidelines and female genital mutilation multi-agency guidelines by adults and children's safeguarding partnerships. In doing so we will conduct a local audit on how the statutory forced marriage guidance and FGM multi-agency guidelines and the new guidance relating to stalking are implemented locally and taking action to address any gaps. The next scheduled review of the city's Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults procedures will also include a focus on domestic violence, forced marriage and FGM.*
- Ensure work with children and young people includes identification, recording and responding to sexual abuse, domestic violence, forced marriage and 'honour'-based violence, FGM, sexual exploitation or harassment and trafficking in their initial assessments.
- Deliver the nationally evaluated multi-agency DV Coordinated Community Group programme for children and young people and concurrent group for mothers who have experienced domestic violence
- Ensure access to support and counselling to children who witness violent behaviour in their families so that they can build resilience and create healthy and respectful relationships in the future.*
- Develop and deliver safe, supervised child contact facilities for domestic violence survivors, children and young people and their non-resident parents.
- Improve responses to domestic and sexual violence amongst Gypsy and Traveller communities; to include: ensuring any new site development addresses the safety needs of women and children in its design, development and management; a dedicated Gypsy & Traveller domestic and sexual violence advocacy post co-located in local specialist services; consulting with Gypsy and Traveller women about their health, support and safety needs; and publicising information on rape and sexual violence amongst Gypsy and Traveller communities including targeting perpetrators about criminal justice penalties
- Develop and deliver independent domestic violence advocacy support for survivors using the family justice system.
- Develop the support available for women and girls in the sex industry and at risk of commercial sexual exploitation to ensure access to support is available for exiting the sex industry where women chose to do this.

- Identify and deliver effective measures for enabling women, who identify being involved in the sex industry through lack of economic choice or due to substance misuse or other issues, to safely exit the sex industry if that is their choice.
- Integrate violence against women and girls outcomes into local delivery models and joint commissioning programmes; for example for families facing multiple disadvantage, or 'troubled families' who will suffer problems associated with domestic and sexual violence.
- Continue to deliver the programme on teenage child-to-parent abuse (Break4Change) through multi-agency partnership with specialist domestic violence services.
- Increase awareness about all aspects of trafficking across Sussex; and improving ways of identifying and supporting victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and prostitution

Protection and prosecution

Taking action to reduce the risk to victims of these crimes, and ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable, brought to justice and provided with opportunities for change in a way that maximises safety

Protection is not just about immediate physical safety but also a deeper sense of safety and security, and in order for survivors to realise their right to live free from violence, accessible protective measures must be available across all forms of violence against women and girls.

This strategy recognises that the provision of high quality violence against women support services detailed above is a core form of protection. Such services provide the foundation for all protective measures, since they keep survivors safe in the moment (through crisis intervention) and in the aftermath of violence (through ongoing practical and emotional support).

Effective protection is also dependent on access to civil law measures designed to address violence against women and girls, through various protection orders and arrangements in respect of access to children. The accessibility and effectiveness of these remedies are crucial, given that so few survivors choose to pursue a criminal prosecution.

This strategy also recognises that if protecting women from violence is to be realised, public safety issues must also be addressed, whether this be through environmental design or addressing public space harassment or representations of women that reinforce their sexual availability and commodification.

Parallel approaches to protection and prosecution will be developed, for example prioritising the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls while they are still involved in the sex industry, or in conditions of sex trafficking or sexual exploitation, whilst penalising traffickers, pimps, procurers and promoters of prostitution, and simultaneously supporting women who chose to exit the sex industry.

Brighton & Hove is committed to ensuring that victims who are at risk of serious harm or homicide are provided with an effective multi-agency response; that perpetrators are managed effectively in the community in order to reduce future harm, and that there is an effective criminal justice system response that contributes to increased victim confidence.

This strategy aims to increase reporting and bring more offenders to justice, but with the recognition that nationally, success in these areas remains limited, and there are some forms of violence against women and girls where reporting is still very limited and prosecution non-existent. Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Integrated Offender Management programmes need to integrate an analysis of perpetrators of violence against

women and girls into their management of dangerous individuals, whilst simultaneously creating deeper and longer term change through prevention work. This Strategy is also clear that there will be an increased focus on tackling the demand side of commercial sexual exploitation and we will ensure the buyers of women and girls for sex are aware of this approach.

We recognise that given the current high attrition rates for violence against women and girls offences, and under-reporting of these crimes by victims, perpetrator programmes and interventions that rely on criminal justice mandated entry will reach a tiny minority of perpetrators.

This strategy is committed to delivering community based programmes and interventions that are nationally accredited by *Respect*, that work to increase victim safety, informed by a gendered analysis of violence and abuse, and which allows for voluntary entry. At present, these only exist for male domestic violence perpetrators. Similarly, intervention with sex offenders, either with adults in the criminal justice system or through interventions with young people, needs to be founded on an analysis of the operation of gendered power.

This strategy also recognises that if we are calling on agencies to hold perpetrators to account by managing and reducing the risk they pose, and on perpetrators to change their behaviour, we must ensure that appropriate services are available which support this. Health and social care professionals also play a key role in challenging and holding perpetrators to account, through individual and family interventions.

Brighton & Hove has made a commitment to:

- Continue to deliver high-quality independent advocacy services for domestic and sexual violence survivors, in recognition of their key role as a provider of protection.
- Take action to address any inequalities in terms of access to protection, for example due to the impact of legal aid reforms or changes to the ways in which women who are endangered because of insecure immigration status.
- Develop a more integrated response across criminal and civil/family courts by providing access to independent advocacy for victims using civil remedies to access protection, and ensuring these do not contradict protective measures within the criminal justice system.
- Deliver accredited domestic violence perpetrator programmes that are accessible not only for abusers mandated to attend by the courts as part of their probation order or with a recommendation from the family court, but also as self-referrals.*
- Prioritise increased reporting of violence against women and girls and reduced attrition in all cases alongside the availability of options that increases safety, security, well-being and addresses the harms of violence.
- Identify offending associated with the sex industry (such as kerb crawling, paying for sex with someone forced or coerced; paying for sex with minors, and sexual or physical assaults

against women and girls involved in the sex industry) and increase the opportunity to bring offenders to justice for these crimes. This includes taking action to close sex-industry establishment and prosecuting brothel owners or managers if they are identified as being involved in criminal activity.*

- Take a more proactive approach to ensuring the protection and safety of women and girls involved in the sex industry, through coordinated action to address violence or exploitation against women and girls involved in the sex industry and supporting their safe exit if that is their choice.*
- Increase protection of women and girls individually, and collectively as a group, which also involves challenging and minimising the demand produced by men who buy sex which increases the market for commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking, harms women and girls as a group and inhibits progress towards gender equality.*
- Ensure any action to reduce the buying of sex is simultaneously carried out alongside prioritising support and safety measures for individual women and girls to continue to access support services which maximise their safety and protection, and alongside action against offenders to reduce the risk of further offences against women and girls.
- Work with colleagues in Licensing in relation to the new legislative powers available to Local Authorities that surround the licensing of Sexual Entertainment Venues in the city, such as lap-dancing clubs, in order to limit the numbers, and work towards a zero tolerance, of sexual entertainment and sex-industry establishments.*
- Monitor the changing patterns of men purchasing women for sex, as a result of challenging the demand produced by men who buy sex which increases commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking for sexual exploitation, and take action to mitigate any increasing risks individual women and girls may face as a result.
- Increase protection for survivors facing ritual abuse, by establishing recording mechanisms to assess local prevalence and areas of particular concern; ensuring that missing people teams and care leaving teams are trained on ritual abuse and early identification and warning signs; and that information sharing systems are developed so that intelligence can be shared without further compromising the safety of survivors.
- Work with partner agencies on improving their ability to identify and respond to women in Brighton & Hove who have been trafficked or who need support to exit the sex industry.
- Ensuring criminal justice system data collection and collation systems meet obligations for monitoring under the equality duties.

Partnership working

Work in partnership to deliver co-ordinated action across all services and partnerships, informed by consistent and coordinated policies, systems and leadership, to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families

Violence against women and girls prevention is central to agendas on public health; reducing crime and the harm caused by serious violent crime; safeguarding children and adults with support needs; promoting education, learning and skills development; and promoting equality.

Those with the power to transform the cultures that perpetuate violence against women and girls must work together. This strategy encourages partners to work together to achieve positive outcomes.

Brighton & Hove has made a commitment to:

- Introduce a citywide Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy Manager and Commissioner from 2012.*
- Restructure the domestic and sexual violence partnership and commissioning arrangements to effectively incorporate the violence against women and girls work programme. This will involve:
 - establishing a citywide multi-agency violence against women and girls Strategy Group to oversee delivery of this strategy;*
 - establishing appropriate operational and provider forums across the areas of prevention, provision and protection to lead the improvements in public services and delivery of the action plan.*
 - ensure clear responsibility for the joint violence against women and girls commissioning* by reviewing the remit and effectiveness of the Domestic Violence Commissioners Group and other relevant partnership commissioning arrangements
 - reviewing the remit and effectiveness of the Domestic Violence Forum and working groups, the Sexual Violence Reference Group and Sex Workers Steering Group, and ensuring partnership arrangements focus on the sex industry and challenging demand for commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. *
 - resourcing a process for survivor involvement in the commissioning and delivery process locally, that engages survivors across violence against women and girls crime types in the development, delivery and review of the strategy and action plan.*
- Ensure violence against women and girls commissioning and delivery is mainstreamed into the work of existing local partnerships. Outcomes for victim-survivors, in terms of safety, well-being, empowerment and access to support should be the measure of success across the statutory and voluntary sectors.

- Resource the collection of disaggregated data on all forms of violence against women from partner agencies, to inform the review of the strategy and action plan. Data systems to be developed and coordinated to collect disaggregated stats; and to include collection of 'new' data for example, on forced marriage, FGM, sexual exploitation, prostitution and trafficking.*
- Address the health, social and economic consequences of violence against women and girls by reframing mainstream priorities, policies and work programmes so that a gendered analysis takes place and violence against women and girls is integrated into existing work (for example in areas of youth crime, safeguarding, homelessness, poverty, equality, unemployment, substance misuse, and health and well-being).

Delivering the strategy and monitoring progress

This strategy signals the commitment locally to meeting the challenges ahead and sets out an integrated and collective strategic approach to addressing this important community safety issue.

The city outcome for all services and partnerships is for local residents and communities to be free from violence against women and girls by:

**Increasing survivor safety,
holding perpetrators to account,
decreasing social tolerance and acceptance, and
increasing people's ability to have safe, equal, violence-free relationships**

The subsequent annual delivery plan will provide a mechanism for implementing the strategy and will include an assessment framework pinpointing areas requiring greater emphasis.

In order to ensure our approach is truly integrated we have converted the Domestic Violence Coordinator post into a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy Manager and Commissioner. This post will be located with the Community Safety division of the council, and will coordinate the day to day delivery of this Strategy, providing citywide leadership for, and coordination of, the approach outlined in this Strategy, in terms of:

- Perspective and policy
- Prevention and earlier intervention
- Provision of services
- Protection and Prosecution
- Partnership working

Despite this being a difficult financial climates in the public sector, we have committed to protecting and expanding the funding for these services over the life of this strategy.

The Action Plan will detail the services we commit to making available and actions that we commit to delivering over the next five years, how we will measure success as well as some of the more detailed work required in order to ensure we meet our strategic priorities.

A new citywide Violence Against Women Strategic Group, consisting of chief officers across the city will meet quarterly to review progress on its delivery, and report on progress to the Local Strategic Partnership and Council Leadership. Agencies will be held publicly accountable for their part in delivering this strategy.

Appendix 1: Definitions

This strategy understands violence against women and girls to include actions which harm or cause suffering or indignity to women and children, where those carrying out the actions are mainly men and where women and children are predominantly the victims. The different forms of violence against women - including emotional, psychological, sexual and physical abuse, coercion and constraints - are interlinked and they have their roots in gender inequality.

Domestic violence

– a pattern of coercive control, by one person using emotional, financial, physical and/or sexually abusive behaviours to ensure power and control over another with whom they have, or have had, an intimate or family relationship. The main characteristic of domestic violence is that the behaviour is intentional and is calculated to induce fear, and involves the misuse of power to control how the victim thinks, feels and behaves

The definition of domestic violence for monitoring purposes, nationally and locally is:

Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse [psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional] between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This includes issues of concern to Black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as so-called 'honour based violence', female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. An adult is defined as any person aged 18 years or over. Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, and grandparents, whether directly related, in-laws or stepfamily.

Physical violence may include, for example, punching; slapping; hitting; biting; pinching; kicking; pulling hair out; pushing; shoving; burning or strangling. Sexual abuse may include the use of force, threats or intimidation to engage in sexual activity; abusers may taunt or use degrading treatment related to sexuality, force the use of pornography, or force their partners to have sex with other people. Psychological and emotional violence includes harassment; destructive criticism; threats; verbal abuse; isolation; destroying possessions; humiliation and degradation and a range of other abusive behaviours. Financial abuse is one of the most prominent forms of control tactics, which involves three distinct but overlapping factors which can have a negative impact on a survivor's economic well-being. These include the perpetrator using male privilege to exploit existing economic disadvantage; causing survivors to incur costs as a result of domestic violence, and using economic abuse to deliberately threaten their economic security.

Rape, sexual violence and abuse

– an act of violence and domination using sexual acts including penetration as weapons. Legally, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 extends the definition of rape to include the penetration by a penis of the vagina, anus or mouth of another person. It can be committed against men or women but since it involves penile penetration it can only be committed by men. The Act also changes the law about consent and belief in consent: a person consents if he or she *agrees by choice*, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Sexual assault is an act of physical, psychological and emotional violation, in the form of a sexual act, which is inflicted on someone without consent. It can involve forcing or manipulating someone to witness or participate in any sexual acts. It ranges from adults exposing their genitals ("flashing") through to repeated brutal sexual torture, and in the most extreme cases death. Child sexual abuse involves sexual activity with children by adults, and coercive sexual activity between children themselves. It involves an abuse of power and an abuse of trust to persuade or force a child to take part in sexual activities, or encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual violence may also involve ritual abuse, which usually starts in early childhood and usually involves more than one person as abusers, and is defined as organised sexual and other forms of abuse, using rituals (with or without a belief system) and patterns of learning and development to sustain the abuse and silence the abused.

Perpetrators range from adults to children and young people, and can include relatives, intimate partners and strangers, although most are known in some way. It can happen anywhere – in the family/household, workplace, public spaces, social settings, during war/conflict situations.

Stalking

– repeated (on at least two occasions) harassment or other behaviours causing fear, alarm or distress. It can include repeated or threatening phone calls, texts or letters, cards or ‘presents’; damaging property; following someone and turning up at their home or workplace; faking someone’s identity to contact others; targeting friends, family and neighbours.

Forced marriage

– a marriage in which one or both spouses do not, or in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities, cannot, consent to the marriage and duress is involved, which can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage affects people from many communities and cultures, - for example, people from Black, minority ethnic and refuge communities; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; and disabled people. It involves a

So-called ‘honour’ based violence

– a term used to describe different forms of violence, mainly but not exclusively against women, including assault, imprisonment and murder, which is used to control behaviour within families and communities to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Victims are punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour. In transgressing this correct code of behaviour, the person shows that they have not been properly controlled to conform by their family and this is to the “shame” or “dishonour” of the family. The concept of ‘honour’ is a motive for violence, or a constraining factor preventing women from leaving abusive situations, rather than a specific form of violence. It cuts across all cultures, nationalities, faith groups and communities, and transcends national and international boundaries.

For legal and monitoring purpose, the CPS and ACPO have a common definition of honour based violence: a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

– involves the complete or partial removal or alteration of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. FGM is classified into four types: Type 1 – Clitoridectomy: partial or total removal of the clitoris and, in very rare cases, only the prepuce; Type 2 – Excision: partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora; Type 3 – Infibulation: narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, or outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris; and Type 4 – Other: all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, for example, pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterising the genital area. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life.

It is mostly carried out on young girls at some time between infancy and the age of 15 or before marriage, and occasionally on pregnant women and on widows. Unlike male circumcision, which is legal in many countries, it is now illegal across much of the globe including in England under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, and its extensive harmful health consequences are widely recognised.

Trafficking

– can occur across international borders and within countries (internal trafficking). It involves the action of the recruitment, transportation, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person; for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs” (The Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human beings)

A victim is defined as any person who is subject to trafficking by any of the means specified in the Convention. The consent of a victim to the exploitation is irrelevant where any of the means set forth by the definition (coercion, fraud, deception) have been used. Victims of trafficking must be recognised as such to avoid police and public authorities treating them as illegal migrants or criminals. Failure to identify a trafficking victim correctly could mean that a victim is denied their fundamental rights. During the identification process the person cannot be removed from the territory. There are special provisions for child victims under 18, who are particularly vulnerable.

Sexual exploitation, including through prostitution and the sex industry

– a practice by which a person achieves sexual gratification, financial gain or advancement through the abuse or exploitation of a person’s sexuality by abrogating that person’s human right to dignity, equality, autonomy, and physical and mental well-being. Activities such as pornography, prostitution, stripping, lap dancing, pole dancing and table dancing are forms of commercial sexual exploitation. A sexual activity becomes sexual exploitation if it breaches a person’s human right to dignity, equality, respect and physical and mental wellbeing. It becomes commercial sexual exploitation when another person, or group of people, achieves financial gain or advancement through the activity.

These activities have been shown to be harmful for some individual women involved and have a negative impact on the position of all women through the objectification of women’s bodies. Sexual exploitation eroticizes women’s inequality and is also a vehicle for racism, which disproportionately victimising minority women. Commercial sexual exploitation commodifies women and girls and supports a culture that views women as objects who are more a ‘sum of body parts’ than a whole being, and eroticises men’s violence and their perceived ‘right to buy’ whatever acts they have sexualised. This happens irrespective of whether individual women claim success or empowerment from the activity. It is essential to separate sexual activity from exploitative sexual activity.

The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition, for example the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. The commercial sexual exploitation of children consists of criminal practices that demean, degrade and threaten the physical and psychosocial integrity of children. There are three primary and interrelated forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children: prostitution, pornography and trafficking for sexual purposes. Other forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children include child sex tourism, child marriages and forced marriages.

Sexual harassment in the workplace and public sphere

- Sexual harassment constitutes an abuse of power that involves any unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature. It may occur in a context of domestic and/or sexual violence and abuse, and can also occur in the workplace or in the public sphere.

Sexual harassment may be verbal (comments about appearance, requests for sexual favours) non-verbal (display of sexually explicit material) or physical (touching, pinching, assault, rape). Sexual harassment at work can also involve conduct based on sex affecting a person's dignity of women and men at work, which include physical, verbal and non verbal conduct. Conduct is unacceptable if it is unwanted, unreasonable and offensive to the recipient.

Street sexual harassment occurs by those who feel a sense of entitlement that women are available for their use and abuse. At its core it is a power dynamic that constantly reminds historically subordinated groups (women and LGBTQ people, for example) of their vulnerability to assault in public spaces. Further, it reinforces the ubiquitous sexual objectification of these groups in everyday life.

Appendix 2: Structure for delivery (to follow once partnerships reviewed)
